

permeate back to the feed to the reverse osmosis unit; and wherein the elevated pressure is substantially the same as the inlet pressure of the nanofiltration unit.

COMMENTS:

Claims 3, 27 and 37 have been amended to correct the redundancy of describing univalent selective membranes.

Claims 24 and 53 have been amended by incorporating the feature that the ED membranes include at least one univalent anion selective membrane and at least one univalent cation selective membrane, which was originally described in claims 26 and 55, which have been canceled.

It is believed that the present amendments do not create redundancies in the claims, and that all claims differ in scope.

The Examiner had inquired about the clarity of the terms "elevated pressure", when used to describe the ED unit. With respect, the Applicant maintains that the description of those terms in the original specification at paragraphs [00074] – [00077] is sufficient to clearly define those terms in the present context.

Claims 42, 49 and 58 have been amended by replacing the description of the evaporator as being designed to "concentrate either the retentate or the diluate" to being designed to "further concentrate the concentrate stream". This change makes the claims agree with the apparatus shown in Figs. 6 and 7, with the claims from which they ultimately depend, and with the text at least at paragraphs [00086] – [00089].

Furthermore, the Applicant would like to replace the drawings that were filed with the original specification with new drawing sheets. The Applicant's draftsman is presently preparing the new sheets and they will be filed as soon as they are ready. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner provide that the application be held for issuance until new drawing sheets are received.